

[p.43c]

322 is sold in Pátzcuaro, where there is a broom
438 factory.

MISCELLANEOUS PROCESSES

- 237 *Wax bleaching and candlemaking.*—Beeswax is often bleached by exposure to the sun. Melted wax is poured into bowls so that it forms a thin shell over the inside. These shells are removed and exposed to the sun for several days until the wax becomes white. Although the wax loses weight by this process, it sells for no more than unbleached wax. The extra effort thus apparently results in an economic loss, making the motivations for the work somewhat obscure. Although men do all other work connected with beekeeping, women often bleach the wax.
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394 Candles are made by men. Two candle-makers are reputed to live in Cherán. The only one who could be located was always so drunk at the time of interviewing that little reliability can be attached to the data secured

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TABLE 1.—Estimates of maize yields in Cherdn—
Continued

ESTIMATE BASED ON OBSERVATIONS AT HARVEST

Type of land	Yield in fanegas per hectare	Remarks
Poor to average land.....	3	Maize badly damaged by early frost.
Average land.....	12	Maize slightly damaged by frost.

In addition to securing data on yield, i.e., income, for maize, an effort was made to secure data on production costs. General statements as to the amount of time put in on farm work proved worthless. Usually the time given would scarcely provide for a single weeding. The best figures were secured by breaking down the different steps and getting experienced farmers to estimate the time necessary for cultivating 1 hectare. A summary of such data gives the following:

Labor of owner:

	Days
First plowing.....	10
Second plowing (at right angles).....	10
Sowing.....	3
First cultivation (with plow).....	4
Second cultivation (with plow).....	3
First weeding (with sickle or machete).....	3
Second weeding (often omitted).....	3
Harvest.....	1
Carrying maize to house (estimated average).....	5

Total..... 42

Hired labor:

Sowing (2 peons).....	3
Harvesting (3 peons).....	1

Costs:

Owner's labor (42 days valued at \$0.45 a day outside of planting and harvesting time).....	\$18.90
2 peons for 3 days.....	3.00
3 peons for 1 day.....	1.50

Total..... \$23.40

On the assumption that a man will own sufficient land to require hired labor, the summary given above includes 9 man days of hired labor at a cost of \$4.50 or a total of 51 man days of labor worth \$23.40. To this must be added \$30 for hire of an ox team if one is not owned, probably \$1 in taxes, and \$2.50 for the value of the seed corn (one-half *fanega*), or a total of \$56.90. If this is about an average piece of land, the yield will be 15 to 20 *fanegas* of shelled

243 maize, for which the farmer should receive from
 433 \$75 to \$120, or a profit of \$22.10 to \$63.10.
 461 From this, in theory, should be deducted interest
 on the investment in land and equipment as well
 as a depreciation allowance on the equipment.
 If the land is worth \$90 (above average), it
 would seem fair to allow at least \$11 for these
 charges, which still leaves a profit of \$11.10 to
 \$52.10.²³

As will be seen in later discussions, this makes maize farming on average or better land probably one of the most worth-while businesses in Cherán. Obviously there are elements of risk. Farmers on poor land, moreover, probably get no profits at all on this basis, for labor and expenses would be reduced very little relative to reductions in yield. The second weeding and part of the harvesting expenses might be eliminated. But if the yield is as low as $1\frac{1}{2}$ fanegas (as has been reported) a man would get virtually no return at all. If he had his own ox team and did all his own work (with the help of sons or his wife), he might get \$4 to \$5 worth of maize for his effort after deducting the costs of seed and taxes. From the standpoint of our economy, there is obviously a very considerable net loss.

To view the agricultural situation in Cherán only from the standpoint of our economy, however, would be grossly misleading, for to do so does not take into account numerous cultural factors. The Cherán point of view does not reckon agricultural activity in terms of interest, profits, and wages, but in terms of maize in the storage house. I have already mentioned that harvest workers refused an increase in wages from 50 centavos to \$1 if the right to glean were rescinded. Most observers agree that the amount of maize obtained from gleaning in a day is less than can be bought for 50 centavos. At \$1 the workman could therefore buy more corn than his wife could obtain by gleaning. The large farmers would get a more thorough harvest and would not have to employ supervisors. On a bookkeeping basis, everyone would benefit. But the harvest hand would not have a load of maize, small though it might be, to carry home from a day's work; he would have only an inedible silver peso in his pocket.

²³ Charges for animals to carry the crop and for watchmen and storage facilities are not included.

243 In the case of the farmer who slaves at pro-
433 ducing a scanty crop on submarginal land,
461 similar considerations are important. The
farmer does not count interest and wages; the
measure of his effort is maize in the storehouse
to feed his wife and children. It is useless to
point out that he could earn enough wages for
the same amount of labor to buy two or three
times as much maize as he can produce, for he
will not be convinced.

243 Even in the case of the average or somewhat
433 better than average case cited in detail, the
461 calculations made on the basis of our economic
viewpoints are relatively valueless. Profits, in-
terest, depreciation, and wages do not enter
into the farmer's calculation (with the excep-
tion of a few large farmers). Rather would
the typical farmer calculate that the maize
obtained in this case would, with a family of
not over five, feed the family for a year by
exercising due care. If he had two pieces,
each of a hectare or a little more in area, in two
locations to plant alternate years, he could
count with some security on feeding his family.
If, in addition, he had a bit of wheatland, he
would probably sell enough wheat to meet the
essential cash outlays for his family. Any in-
come from livestock, work in the forest, or as
a hired laborer would then go into essentially
luxury spending or savings to buy more land.
It is wheat that is a money crop, it should be
noted, and not maize. Only the wealthy sell
maize, and only the poor or improvident buy it.

184 In case maize is raised for sale on any scale,
433 however, the farmer encounters new market-
243 ing problems. The local market prefers yellow
maize, as does Mestizo Purépero. Uruapan,
on the other hand, prefers white maize, while
the Lake Pátzcuaro region desires pink, red, or
mixed color maize. As prices may vary in the
different major markets, the farmer's income
may be affected by the color of maize he has
grown.

243 From the statements given above it should
433 not be concluded that the idea of a return for
427 land ownership, i.e., a return upon the capital
investment, is lacking in Cherán. It exists,
but it is colored by the local attitudes. Thus,
farmers with more land than they can con-
veniently cultivate, storekeepers owning land,
and various others may rent land on a share-

231 amount of labor. Not only must *rastrojo* be
243 cut, but the animals must be visited every 2 or
3 days while in pasture.

427 The question may be raised why horses or
434 mules have not replaced oxen to any extent.
Although horses or mules will do at least twice
the amount of work in a day, owing to their
greater speed and ability to work longer hours,
they do not thrive on the corn fodder, wheat
straw, and scanty pasturage. Grain feed is
also necessary, at least during the working sea-
son. In general, horses and mules are more
delicate and require more attention, greater
skill, and better shelter. Finally, their initial
cost is greater and they cannot be slaughtered
for meat, as are oxen, when they have outlived
their usefulness as draft animals.

243 *Wheat.*—Although wheat is the primary cash
433 crop of Cherán, it is seldom grown on lands
311 which will produce good maize. Wheat is often
grown on inferior land, often on slopes, but
never on really bad lands. Farmers using
good land for wheat usually have a surplus of
maize lands.

243 The cultivation of wheat takes a little less
461 labor than does that of maize. Plowing is the
433 same or perhaps a little less (the second plow-
ing being shallower). Broadcasting of seed
and harrowing equate with maize planting,
but it is a one-man job and requires no oxen if
the farmer owns a burro. The primitive har-
vesting with a sickle would seem to call for
more labor, but estimates were fairly low. A
summary of estimates for cultivating a hectare
follows:

Labor:		Days
First plowing		10
Second plowing		10
Sowing and harrowing		2 (or less)
Harvesting		4½
Total labor		26½

Costs:

Labor (26½ days at \$0.45, value)	\$11.92
Rent of oxen (20 days at \$0.75, value)	15.00
Taxes	1.00
Seed	1.00

Total production costs..... \$28.92

Interest on capital invest-
ment

11.00

Total cost of cultivation.... \$39.92

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Sierra Tarascans

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Octava, 4 days
 Corpus, 4 days
 Nahuatzen fiesta, 1 day (got drunk)
 San Juan, 1 day
 San Pedro, 1 day (wife's father had a little
 fiesta; got drunk)
 Nahuatzen fiesta, 1 day
 San Francisco fiesta, Cherán, 4 days
 Wedding, 1 day
 Wedding, 1 day
 Negrito dancers, watched 1 day
 Wedding, 1 day
 Funerals, remembers two, but not certain.

Aside from the funerals, this informant remembers spending over 24 days in entertainment during the year. Agustín, on the other hand, spent 41 days (aside from the time after he first arrived in town), at least 6 days being spent at weddings and 8 days in dancing. From various information collected, it seems reasonable to believe that most men spend at least 20 days in weddings, fiestas, and similar entertainment, while young men probably exceed this figure.

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Women, in general, work longer hours at more varied tasks and with numerous interruptions. While women also attend fiestas and weddings in Cherán, they are less apt to go elsewhere. Moreover, even on fiesta days there are meals to prepare and water to carry. Women's work, however, is essentially more social. Water carrying is almost a ritual, as is going to the mill with the maize. Water is almost always carried in special decorated and polished ollas used for no other purpose. Water is dipped out of the fountain in the plaza, the tank at the end of the pipe line, or out of the hollow logs of the aqueduct. The ollas are always carried on the left shoulder on top of the *rebozo*, which forms a sort of pad. Women often go in groups after water and the task is frequently an occasion for meeting friends and talking. Taking maize to the mill is less formalized behavior, but it, too, is a social occasion, which may take 15 minutes and may take an hour, depending on the time of day and the number of friends encountered. Most women prefer to go at a rush hour when they have to stand in line, because they meet so many friends.

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The best picture of women's activities may be presented by giving a number of actual

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461 cases. Women's work varies greatly with the
462 size of the family and the age of the children.
Most women had no clear idea of the time
spent, and the following figures are guesses
given under some pressure.

CASE 1

(3 adults in family.)

	Hours
Going to mill	$\frac{1}{4}$
Carrying water (3 ollas in morning, 2 in afternoon)	1 or 2
Making tortillas	1 or 2
Other food preparation	2 or 3
Washing clothes and taking bath on Wednesdays	5
Sweeping (not every day)	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Marketing	$\frac{1}{4}$
Shelling corn:	
Green	$\frac{1}{4}$
Dry	$\frac{1}{4}$
Visiting neighbors	Variable
Resting	Variable
Minimum daily schedule	6
Total waking hours	13

CASE 2

Family of 8; two girls, one about 8, one about 13.
Woman helps in store owned by family in spare time
but both girls help take maize to the mill, etc. Follow-
ing is estimate of the day preceding the interview.)

	Hours
Going to mill	$\frac{1}{4}$
Shelling corn	2
Making tortillas	2
Carrying water (met friends)	2
Washing clothes (Friday)	2
Sweeping (daily)	$\frac{1}{4}$
Marketing (longer if she meets friends)	$\frac{1}{2}$
Food preparation	3
Care of children	No idea
Visiting friends—does not go out, friends visit her in store	None
Estimated total on ordinary days (not including work in store and caring for children)	10

CASE 3

(Family of 6; 4 children, all big enough to care for
themselves; woman also helps in store.)

	Hours
Mill	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Making tortillas	4
Carrying water (3 or 4 ollas)	1
Ironing (Friday or Saturday)	2
Sweeping (daily)	$\frac{1}{2}$
Marketing	$\frac{1}{4}$
Food preparation	3

Daily minimum, about

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In addition to above, washes 1 day a week, 7 hours.
Also goes occasionally to Parícutin for an hour to interview a debtor.

Waking hours, about 15

CASE 4

(A widow. Several adults in family; woman assisted by daughter-in-law.)

	Hours
Making tortillas	$\frac{1}{2}$
Carrying water (10 ollas with assistance of daughter-in-law)	$\frac{1}{2}$
Cooking	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Sweeping (twice a week)	$\frac{1}{4}$
Marketing (average)	$\frac{1}{2}$
Shelling corn	$\frac{1}{2}$

Daily minimum 4 to 5

In addition, washing and bathing on Wednesday consume 6 to 7 hours. On Thursdays the informant goes to the Paraje to gather herbs, about a 2-hour trip each way. From Saturday to Monday the informant is in Uruapan selling the herbs.

CASE 5

(3 adults in family.)

	Hours
Water carrying, 5 to 7 ollas morning and afternoon (estimate) ..	1
Tortillas, morning and afternoon (total)	2
Shelling corn—buys it shelled	
Going to mill	$\frac{3}{4}$ to 1
Marketing	$\frac{1}{2}$
Food preparation	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Sweeping (once a week)	$\frac{1}{4}$
Washing and bathing every Thursday, about	5

Daily minimum, about 5

Despite the few hours appearing in the statement, the informant said she had little time to rest.

CASE 6

(5 people in family.)

	Hours
3 ollas of water, morning and afternoon ..	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Tortillas	1
Going to mill	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Shelling corn	$\frac{1}{2}$
Sweeping	$\frac{1}{4}$
Food preparation	1
Marketing	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Resting	1 to 2

Daily minimum (exclusive of rest period) about $5\frac{1}{4}$

Visits neighbors a little.

Clothes washing 8 a. m. to 1 p. m., Tuesdays.

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CASE 7

(8 people in family.)

	Hours
Tortillas ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour morning and afternoon)	1
Going to mill	$\frac{1}{2}$
Carrying water, 3 ollas, twice a day ..	$\frac{3}{4}$
Preparing food	$\frac{3}{4}$
Marketing	$\frac{1}{2}$
Sweeping	$\frac{1}{2}$
Shelling corn	$\frac{1}{2}$
Visiting mother daily	1
Care of child	2 to 3
Resting	$\frac{1}{2}$

Daily minimum (exclusive of rest periods) about 5

Washing and bath, Fridays, about 4 hours.

CASE 8

(4 people in family.)

	Hours
Tortillas, morning and afternoon, total	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Going to mill	$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$
Carrying water (5 to 7 ollas daily) ..	$\frac{3}{4}$
Preparing food	$\frac{3}{4}$
Sweeping (twice a week)	$\frac{1}{2}$
Marketing	$\frac{1}{2}$
Shelling corn	$\frac{3}{4}$
Resting	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1
Visiting, not every day	1

Daily minimum (exclusive of resting and visiting)

5 $\frac{1}{2}$

Washing and bath, Wednesdays, 9 a. m. to 1 or 2 p. m.

None of the women interviewed were too poor to pay for having their maize ground. If they had ground their own maize on the metate, the hours of labor would have been materially increased.

576 In addition to learning the techniques of earning a living and acquiring the necessary sense of responsibility to manage one's affairs, adult life usually requires the learning of a number of rules of behavior. Adults should know that it is never proper to enter a house yard without an invitation, even though it be unfenced. Visitors knock on the gate or call out until an invitation is given. Usually someone comes to the gate to inquire what is wanted, unless the person is very well known. Men are never invited in unless the man of the household is present. If one calls on a person about business, one always stands and talks about other things for a bit first.